



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
WATER RESOURCES COMMISSION

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**Meeting Minutes for May 8, 2003**

**Members in Attendance:**

Karl Honkonen	EOEA
Joe Pelczarski	Designee, CZM
Marilyn Contreas	Designee, DHCD
Peter Webber	Designee, DEM
Gerard Kennedy	Designee, DFA
Glenn Haas	Designee, DEP
Mark Tisa	Designee, MDFW
David Rich	Public Member
Frank Veale	Public Member
Matthew Rhodes	Public Member
Richard Butler	Public Member

**Other in Attendance:**

Michele Drury	DEM/OWR
Mike Gildesgame	DEM/OWR
Lise Marx	MWRA
Vicki Gartland	DEM/OWR
Linda Marler	DEM/OWR
Sara Cohen	DEM/OWR
Margaret Kearns	DFW/Riverways
Carl Leone	MWRA
Vandana Rao	EOEA
Melissa Cryan	EOEA
Milan Horbaczewski	MWRA
David Barnes	FST/MWRA
Pine duBois	Jones River Watershed Association
Ralph Abele	EPA
Kerry Mackin	Ipswich River Watershed Association
Bruce Taggart	USGS

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**Item 1: Executive Director's Report:**

Karl distributed the Aquaria public hearings schedule to the Board Members

**Hydrologic Conditions Report:**

- April rainfall came in normal at 101%, with southeast Massachusetts getting above normal rainfall and western Massachusetts getting quite a bit below normal rainfall
- Second month in a row that the Berkshires have been below normal
- Groundwater levels – western Massachusetts normal, eastern Massachusetts above normal
- Snow is gone with a good snowmelt
- Stream flow in western Massachusetts is normal, eastern Massachusetts is above normal
- Reservoirs are full or near full
- East coast drought is gone except for areas of northern Maine

**Item 2 Vote: Request for Determination of Applicability for the MWRA's Upper Neponset Sewer Rehabilitation Project**

The project will rehabilitate the Upper Neponset Sewer to reduce wet weather overflows experienced upstream. Newton and Brookline receive all their water from the MWRA and send all of their sanitary wastewater to the MWRA wastewater system, so this portion of the flow would not be jurisdictional. Because the wastewater goes to the Deer Island treatment plant in Boston, any wastewater generated in West Roxbury would not be jurisdictional due to the inter-town exemption under the Interbasin Transfer Act. This leaves a portion of Dedham's total wastewater and the infiltration inflow wastewater that comes from Brookline and Newton.

MWRA is going to replace a section of pipes with one single pipe. The remnant pipe will be filled in with cement to prevent the ground from caving in, as well as to prevent any wastewater from getting in. The new pipe will have a 20.56 mgd connection, whereas the old pipe had a 22.6 mgd capacity. Flows may increase due to the loss of bottlenecking, but the capacity decreases. Staff recommends that the Interbasin Transfer Act does not apply to this project due to the decrease in ability to transfer wastewater.

<b>V O T E</b>	<p>Dick Butler moved with a second by Frank Veale to accept the staff recommendation that the Interbasin Transfer Act does not apply to the Upper Neponset Sewer Rehabilitation Project.</p> <p>The motion was approved by nine in favor, with none opposed.</p>
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**Item 3: Survey of Stream Flow Policies Among the New England States**

The survey was done as a part of the Stream Flow Policy effort. The first thing the group decided to do was review what the other New England states were doing. Everyone is using instream flow for different purposes. Some are using it for water allocation, some for water quality.

In Massachusetts, a flow threshold has been set for low flow periods. This idea has not worked that well. USGS performed a study so that a science-based decision could be made. Results are based on gauge data on areas greater than 50 square miles and representing the median of the August daily flow. A hydrologic model was completed. A habitat study was completed in the Ipswich Watershed. The Ipswich habitat study was published and that data then applied to eleven other gages somewhat unregulated in the state. This will be published in the Fall.

Maine's plan is under development. In New Hampshire, they came up with some flow rules that some people balked at. They are doing a pilot program on two rivers. Vermont has what they call "conservation flows." Connecticut has their Diversion Act. They came up with their own aquatic base flow terminology. They agreed with the idea of median flow and monthly and daily flows. In Rhode Island, they have a flow standard. They are under development as a part of the Water Allocation Program. Their proposal right now is to take the median of median monthly flows.

What do they have in common? They all recognize the importance of the hydrograph. All of them had some difficulty separating flow standards from current withdrawals. In Massachusetts, we need to focus on all aspects of the hydrograph. Also, we need to get broad public input. The next step is to identify and quantify river functions. After that, estimates of flow for each function need to be developed and then a hydrograph should be defined for what the flows do.

Gildesgame asked if any states had built these flows into rules, regulations, or guidance for water suppliers. They tried in New Hampshire, but it was shot down, so they're going back to the drawing board. In Vermont, they have used this information for both water quality and quantity standards. The EPA is not going to enact any kind of national standard; it will mostly be done state by state.

Kerry Mackin stated that she would like to see the streamflow standards adopted sooner rather than later for rivers, especially those that are endangered. Massachusetts is doing well in studying this issue and they are ahead of other states on this research.

It is not yet clear how these standards are going to be enforced.. The point is made that we need to be able to have the means to enforce them. The WRC has to decide how to enforce these.

Commissioner Webber asked for an elaboration of the Low Impact Development (LID) concept. Vicki listed the many different components of LID. He also asked Karl to look at what other states are doing to enforce these regulations.

Next step is deciding when we get the information, how we're going to use it.

Meeting adjourned.

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Meeting minutes approved 9/11/03